

Called To Protect[™] – Reference Documents

Online Safety

Our children are our Nation's most valuable asset. They represent the bright future of our country and hold our hopes for a better Nation. Our children are also the most vulnerable members of society. Protecting our children against the fear of crime and from becoming victims of crime must be a national priority.

Unfortunately the same advances in computer and telecommunication technology that allow our children to reach out to new sources of knowledge and cultural experiences are also leaving them vulnerable to exploitation and harm by computer-sex offenders.

*Louis J. Freeh, Former Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation*

While on-line computer exploration opens a world of possibilities for children, expanding their horizons and exposing them to different cultures and ways of life, they can be exposed to dangers as they hit the road exploring the information highway. There are individuals who attempt to sexually exploit children through the use of on-line services and the Internet. Some of these individuals gradually seduce their targets through the use of attention, affection, kindness, and even gifts. These individuals are often willing to devote considerable amounts of time, money, and energy in this process. They listen to and empathize with the problems of children. They will be aware of the latest music, hobbies, and interests of children. These individuals attempt to gradually lower children's inhibitions by slowly introducing sexual context and content into their conversations.

Rules for On-Line Safety

- Do not give out personal information such as your name, address, telephone or cell number, or where you go to school to a stranger.
- Never enter someone else's personal information onto the internet.
- Never accept an invitation from a stranger who wants to add you to their "friends" list.
- Never meet a stranger in person, who found you on the internet, NEVER. If someone asks to meet you, tell your parents.
- Never send pictures of yourself in the internet, without permission.
- Don't respond to any messages that are mean, rude or make you feel uncomfortable.
- Show your parents anytime you receive a message that is mean, says bad things about you or others, don't delete it.
- Never send rude or nasty communications on the internet. If you wouldn't agree to have it printed in the school newspaper, you shouldn't send it.
- Never share your passwords with anyone, even your best friends.
- Never download any software onto your computer without your parent's permission.

For further information, please contact your local FBI office or the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at 1-800-843-5678.

WATCH

1. Watch for physical boundary violations.

- Roughhousing, wrestling, or tickling
- Touching too much
- “Accidentally” touching inappropriately.
- Encouraging children to pile on-top of an adult.
- Having children sit on an adults lap.
- Holding or hugging when the child resists
- Hugs with too much body contact.

2. Watch for emotional boundary violations.

- Spending a great deal of time with a child.
- Calling or emailing a child frequently.
- Getting involved with many of the child’s activities.
- Acting possessive of the child.

3. Watch for behavioral boundary violations.

- Ridiculing the beliefs of the child’s parents
- Allowing children to do things against their parent’s wishes.
- Offering a child cigarettes, alcohol, or drugs.
- Allowing children to look at pornography or to visit inappropriate internet sites

4. Watch for warning signs

These behavioral warning signs may indicate that a child has been abused;

- The child changes his or her routines
- The child begins acting differently
- The child starts complaining about activities or people he or she previously enjoyed.
- The child withdraws from his or her parents
- The child no longer spends time with friends he or she used to.

Watch for these sudden changes in a child’s behavior;

- Bathroom difficult such as bed-wetting or daytime accidents
- Increased moodiness or depression.
- Increased aggressive behavior
- Decline in academic performance
- Difficulties getting along with peers or brothers and sisters.
- Increased inappropriate sexual behavior



ACT

1. Act when you notice warning signs in adults.

- Talk to the person you suspect.
- Explain to the person you suspect that you do not allow the actions or behaviors.
- Express your concerns to the person supervising the program where you believe boundary violations may be occurring.
- Remove your child from the situation.
- If you suspect abuse, call protective services or the police.

2. Act when you notice warning signs in your child.

- Ask your child questions like, "What is going on in your life?" or "Why are you suddenly behaving differently?"
- Let your child know he or she can tell you anything.
- Assure your child of your love and desire to keep him or her safe.

TEACH

1. Teach your children to help protect themselves.

Teach them about their bodies

- Teach them the names of their body parts, especially their private parts.
- Once they know the names of their private parts, teach them how those private parts are different from the other parts of the body, such as eyes, ears, feet and arms.
- Teach them that most people are not allowed to touch their private parts.

Teach children what to do if someone tries to violate their boundaries. Give them permission to;

1. tell the person to stop.
2. get away from the person who is violating their boundaries.
3. tell a person in charge or to tell you the parent.
4. tell another adult who can protect them.

2. Teach your children they can talk to you about anything.

- Maintain open lines of communication and don't act embarrassed when talking to your children.
- Build a sense of trust by being honest and let them know you respect their boundaries.
- Talk with children about sexual abuse in the same manner you would talk to them about any other danger.
- Let your children know they won't be in trouble for telling you if something happens.

RED FLAGS: ACCESS, PRIVACY, AND CONTROL

Child molesters need three things to operate; **access, privacy, and control**. There are usually specific red flags displayed when an adult is trying to gain access, privacy and control.

ACCESS

- Find jobs and does volunteer work to be around children.
- Takes lower paying or less responsible positions just to be around kids.
- Befriends single parents and spends a lot of time with the kids.
- Goes above and beyond the call of duty to spend extra time with kids
- Breaks rules to be around kids.
- Grooms parents and community into permitting increased access to children.

PRIVACY

- Looks for opportunities to be alone with children, such as taking them to the bathroom; offering private lessons, rides, or tutoring; meeting in private spaces out of sight of others; or staying late on the job or premises where there are children.
- Ignores policies and breaks rules regarding privacy with children.
- Discourages other adults from participating in or monitoring his or her activities with children.
- Communicates privately with children via email messages, instant messages, or other social networking sites such as MySpace or Facebook.

CONTROL

- Becomes overly physical or becomes progressively more physically inappropriate.
- Spends too much time with a child or is overly involved in the child's private life.
- Encourages children to break or "stretch" rules (smoking, drinking, looking at pornography, or using drugs).
- Gives special gifts, especially without permission.
- Treats children as if they were peers (uses inappropriate language or swears, tell off-color jokes, talks to kids about personal topics)
- Wants to keep secrets with children.
- Threatens or intimidates a child.